

**DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION**

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June 9, 1995

To: Delta Protection Commission

From: Margit Aramburu, Executive Director

Subject: Briefing and Possible Resolution of Support for Habitat Restoration Project on Prospect Island, Solano County

Background:

At the last meeting, a representative of the Sacramento Corps of Engineers, Leslie Lew, made a brief presentation regarding the proposed habitat restoration project on Prospect Island and asked to be placed on the agenda for a full briefing and possible support of the proposed project. The Commission agreed.

Project Location:

The proposed project is located on a 1,316 acre area in the Yolo Bypass in Solano County in the Primary Zone of the Delta (see Exhibit A). The site is bounded by the Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel to the west, Little Holland Tract to the north, and Miner Slough to the east and south. The southern 309 acres of the area is owned by the Port of Sacramento and used for disposal of dredged material and future mitigation. The Department of Fish and Game owns a 36-acre parcel south of the Port's parcel; the site is natural wetland habitat.

Description of the Site:

The Island is generally flat with man-made levees ringing the Island. The terrain generally slopes upward at the northern portion of the site. The elevations ranges from 2 feet above mean sea level at the northern end to -5 feet below mean sea level at the southern end of the site. The groundwater table is estimated to vary between 1 and 4 feet in depth.

The levees range from about 10 feet to 17 feet above mean sea level. The Ship Channel and Miner Slough levees are riprapped.

The soils are organic, erodible, and soft. The soils include Sacramento silty clay loam, Ryde clay loam, Columbia fine sandy loam, Valdez silt loam, and dredge spoil.

Other than agricultural crops, vegetation is limited to riparian vegetation on a bench of up to 40 feet wide outside the levee. About two-thirds of the perimeter of the site is ringed with riparian vegetation.

#### Uses of the Island:

The Island has been used for row crop and grain production. Crops include corn, safflower, sugar beets, and wheat.

There is no recreational use of Prospect Island.

There are no public roads on Prospect Island.

#### History of Flooding:

Levees completely surround the site. The Ship Channel levee is maintained by the Corps. The other levees are maintained by the landowners, formerly Reclamation District 1667, now the Bureau of Reclamation. The Prospect Island levees were intentionally designed to be low to allow Prospect Island to flood before surrounding islands to the north and east. Prospect Island was flooded in 1980, 1982, 1983, and 1986. and 1995. (1992)

#### Purpose of the Project:

The project has dual goals of decreasing or eliminating maintenance costs on the Ship Channel levees on Prospect Island and restoring fish and wildlife habitat. Abandoning maintenance along the study area portion of the Ship Channel levee would allow the Corps to realize a cost savings of about \$212,000 per year.

#### Proposed Project:

The Corps developed five preliminary alternatives and two final alternatives. All would include:

- \* Breach the ship channel levee in either one or two locations; each breach to be about 250 feet long; riprap the breach areas.
- \* Create interior islands to dissipate wave energy from wind generated waves and for habitat.
- \* Final Alternative 1a includes: two smaller breaches, island construction and planting, relocation of power poles, removal of pumps, etc, construction of a new vehicle road and a bridge across the breach on Miner Slough levee.

\* Final Alternative 1b includes: the same elements as 1a, but less costs on island creation and planting (see Exhibit B).

Project Costs:

Alternative 1:	\$10,753,000
Alternative 2:	\$74,169,000
Alternative 2a:	\$72,468,000
Alternative 3:	\$138,047,000
Final Alternative 1a:	\$26,406,000
Final Alternative 1b:	\$10,453,000

Possible Funding Source: The Prospect Island restoration project is listing for possible funding under the "Category III" funding program. The funding would be split over two years.

Project Participants:

- \* Sacramento Corps of Engineers
- \* U.S. Fish and Wildlife
- \* Bureau of Reclamation
- \* Bureau of Land Management
- \* National Marine Fisheries Service
- \* Department of Water Resources
- \* Department of Fish and Game
- \* Port of Sacramento
- \* Solano County Water Agency
- \* Trust for Public Lands

History of Ownership:

Prospect Island was previously in private ownership by Sakata Brothers out of Clarksburg. In 1993, Trust for Public Lands purchased an option on Prospect Island with the intent of acquiring the property and then selling it to the Bureau of Reclamation, or otherwise assisting in public acquisition. The purchase price was approximately \$2,800,000 (\$2,200 per acre).

Nearby Pending and Proposed Projects:

1. Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel deepening. Most of the Channel and Port facilities were completed in 1963. A project to deepen the channel by 5 feet and to widen the Channel began in 1989 and is currently stopped.
2. Little Holland Tract Reconnaissance Investigation. A study of restoring wetland habitat is due in January 1996. The area has been inundated and subject to tidal action continually since the levees failed in 1983.

Sources:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Reconnaissance Report:  
Prospect Island Fish and Wildlife Habitat Restoration Study,  
Solano County, California, April 1995.

Trust for Public Lands, Memo and Maps, no date, received  
January 7, 1994.

DRAFT

Resolution in Support of Habitat Enhancement on  
Prospect Island, Solano County

WHEREAS the Bureau of Reclamation has acquired a 1,228 acre parcel on Prospect Island in Solano County in the Primary Zone of the Delta; and

WHEREAS farming of the subject property was threatened by the flood easement on the site to allow for flooding of the island to protect properties on nearby islands; and

WHEREAS the proposed project will lessen high annual costs associated with Corps maintenance responsibilities for the levee along the Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel; and

WHEREAS the proposed project will provide restoration of 1,228 acres of riparian and wetland habitat which was previously existing on the site and which will provide habitat for several rare and endangered species and a variety of aquatic and terrestrial species; and

WHEREAS the Delta Protection Act of 1992 (Act) states "that the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is a natural resource of statewide, national and international significance, containing irreplaceable resources and it is the policy of the state to recognize, preserve, and protect those resources of the delta for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations"; and

WHEREAS the Act states "the basic goals of the state for the delta are...protect, maintain, and where possible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the delta environment, including, but not limited to, agriculture, wildlife habitat, and recreational activities"; and

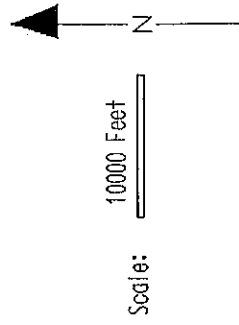
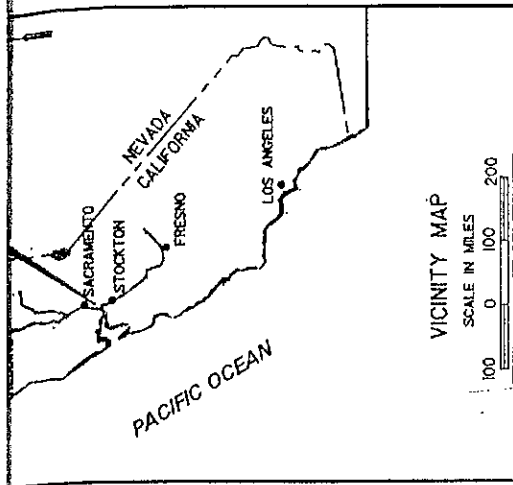
WHEREAS the site is surrounded by waterways and other publicly owned lands and the habitat restoration project has been designed so it will not adversely impact nearby agricultural and other land uses; and

WHEREAS restoration of the site to aquatic and wetland habitat will control and eventually reverse the process of subsidence which is associated with draining of the Delta's peat soils; and

WHEREAS the lands will be managed to provide several inter-related habitats; and

WHEREAS the project has been developed in coordination with a number of local, state and federal agencies and non-profit groups;

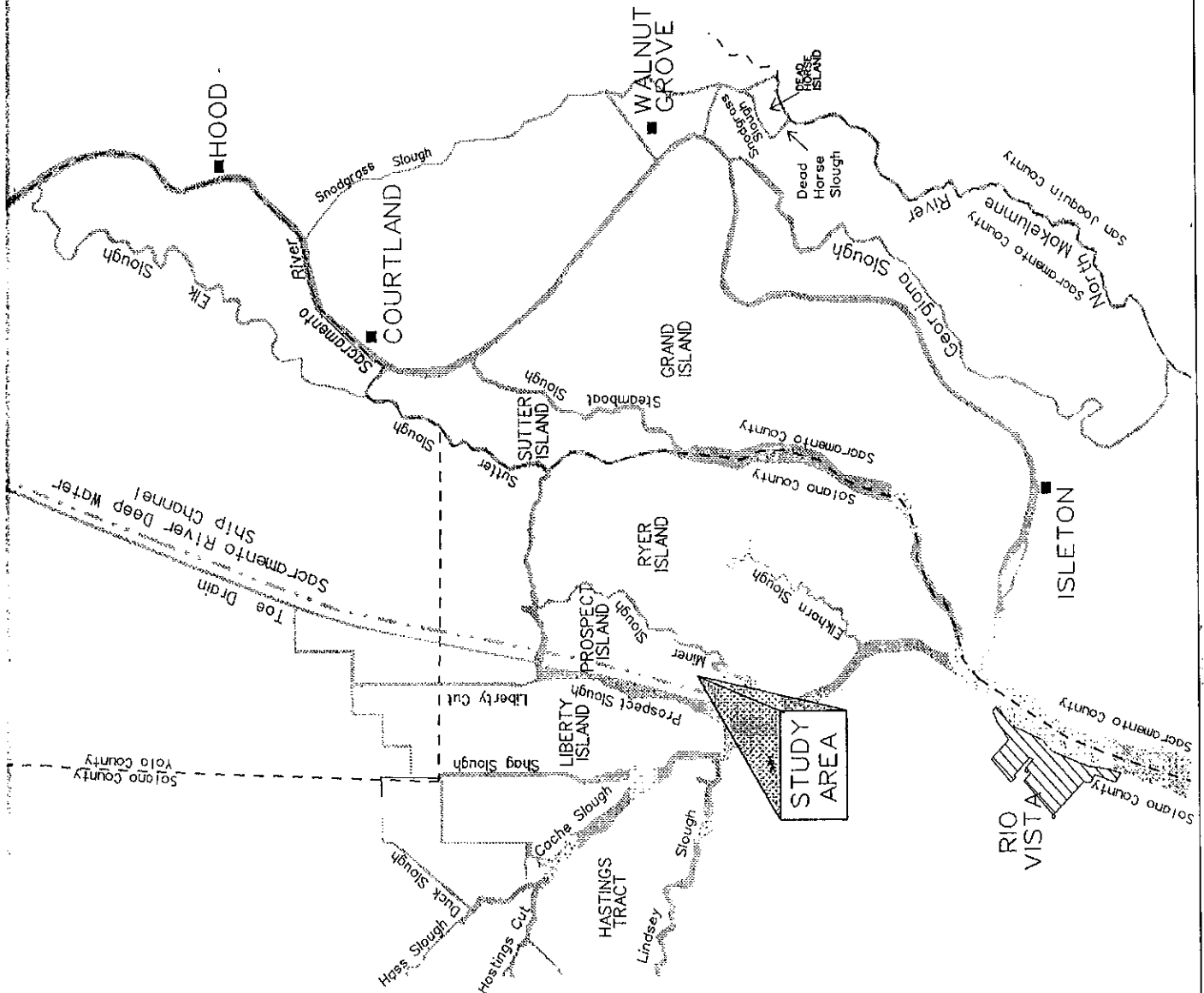
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Delta Protection Commission supports the proposed project to restore aquatic and wetland wildlife habitat on Prospect Island, Solano County.



GENERAL INVESTIGATIONS

# Prospect Island Fish and Wildlife Habitat Restoration Investigation

SACRAMENTO DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA





CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SACRAMENTO DISTRICT



EXHIBIT  
B



NOT TO SCALE

# PROSPECT ISLAND

## FISH & WILDLIFE HABITAT RESTORATION

### STUDY ALTERNATIVE #1B

SECTION A-A

